

Violence — is anyone innocent ?

— *Mahinda Paliawadana*

LANKA

GUARDIAN

Vol. 10

No. 23

April 1, 1988

Price Rs. 5.00

Registered at the GPO, Sri Lanka QJ/84/NEWS/88



Voices from the battlefield

I, Dharmasiri Bandaranayake: documentarist at the front

A dirty war and the camera eye — *J. Uyangoda*

The eastern powder-keg

Why the hunted Prabhakaran is also wooed — *Mervyn de Silva*

Amaradeva: the music-maker of the liberalism

— *Neil Lucky Christopher*

English writing — towards a tradition — *Tilak Gunawardhana*

● **Vijay**

● **Mossad Connection**

● **Opposition Demands**

Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.
noolaham.org | aavanaham.org

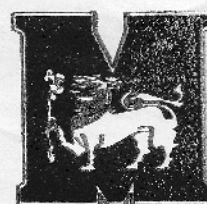
IT TAKES AN EVER-CHANGING COMPANY TO GUIDE YOU IN AN EVER-CHANGING MARKETPLACE.

Mercantile Credit Limited. Long established as the leading finance company in Sri Lanka Nucleus of a corporate group whose policy has always been attuned to the change in the market.

Leaders in HIRE PURCHASE FINANCING and pioneers of LEASE PURCHASE. Diversified into fields as varied as Engineering, Property Development, Housing, Money and Exchange Broking, Produce Broking, and Share Broking, Tourism and Shipping.

Reaffirming our commitment to meeting the needs of a changing marketplace with the offer of our resources and expertise to guide you.

**MERCANTILE
CREDIT
LIMITED**



55, Janadhipathi Mawatha,
Colombo 1. Tel: 266119-9

City Office,
158/2, Dharmapala Mawatha,
Colombo 7. Tel: 599267/8/9

Regional Office: Kandy
Branches: Anuradhapura,
Bandarawela, Gampaha,
Jaffna, Kurunegala, Kalmunai,
Kalutara, Matara, Negombo,
and Ratnapura.

YUSUF BOOK STALL
No. 44, KING STREET,
KANDY.

THE WORM TURNS?

A seemingly trivial incident, but it was front page news in more than one Sunday paper. The staff of a provincial post office walked out when a politician allegedly abused an employee for not getting him a trunk call quickly enough. The strike crippled communications for 22 hours.

The place was Nuwara Eliya. The politician was a visitor to the holiday resort.

It took the District Minister, the Government Agent, and the Police Superintendent three hours to persuade the strikers to go back to work, on an assurance that their grievance would be "looked into" officially. Meanwhile protest posters had been put up outside the post office. There was no business conducted, and the Night Mail too was unserved.

The holiday resort was effectively cut off.

NO TAKERS!

They are shopping for a Vice-Chancellor at Peradeniya. When the University Council met to nominate a successor to the post which will be vacant when Professor Panabokke retires on April 25, there were no candidates.

Members of the Council, heads of departments, deans of the faculties and grade two lecturers were eligible. But nobody applied. And Professor Panabokke is not interested in another term. It has now been decided to advertise.

With chaos on the campuses, and the universities more closed than open (currently closed), few academics would want such a thankless job. Now, it seems, there is none.

T 56: MEDIUM AND MESSAGE

At the Colombo University, it was reported recently, "unidentified persons", marched into lecture rooms and ordered the lecturers and the students out. The lecture on 'MASS MEDIA' was cancelled.

If they did not vacate the campus immediately, a T-56 would have to be used, they were told. The "unidentified persons" in this case were believed to be undergraduates of the same university.

But the terror is not always from the students.

NOT CRICKET

It was a postponement, not a cancellation, even though the postponement can be extended to one year, by which time there may be no need for the by-election. But Mr. Susil Moonesinghe remains the UNP candidate for the vacant parliamentary seat at Homagama. And in a trend setting event fully covered by the media Mr. Moonesinghe inaugurated a new bus route, operated by the state owned CFB, in the electorate he hopes to represent.

Observers do not expect that non-Government party candidates too would be afforded such opportunities.

TRENDS + LETTERS

T. U. L. F. Dilemma

It is disheartening for Lankan Tamils to learn that the Indian government has asked the T.U.L.F. leadership to return home.

Even a few days before India indicated that the T.U.L.F. should go home, a veteran T.U.L.F. politician Mr. S. Nadarajah was shot dead by militants for supporting Indian Army actions. India could not have been unaware of this.

"Amir" must blame himself for falling into this awkward position — After the 1983 racial riots Amir depended entirely on Indian blessings and decided to stay in Madras along with his colleagues. He defended his stay in Madras by saying that his life was endangered by the Sri Lankan Army and in later years he feared Tamil militants would kill him if he returned to Jaffna. But one cannot help but asking why should he fear death threats, if he had a strong mass following.

(Continued on page 4)

LANKA

GUARDIAN

Vol. 10 No. 23 April 1, 1988

Price Rs. 5.00

Published fortnightly by
Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd.

No. 248, Union Place,
COLOMBO — 2.

Editor: Marjory de Silva
Telephone: 547584

CONTENTS

News Background	3
Foreign News	9
The Film on Eastern Province	11
"Echoes of War" — Review	17
Violence	20
Amirajewa the Melodious Man	21
Culture	23

Printed by Ananda Press,
B2/5, Walfendal Street, Colombo 13,
Telephone: 36575

Now Available

A COLONIAL ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM IN TRANSITION

The Experience of Sri Lanka

by

B. S. WIJEWEERA

Foreword by

Prof. W. Howard Wriggins

Former U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka

The book examines the reform of the administrative system from a highly centralised one to devolutionary structures intended to facilitate democratic participation and meet the challenges of post-Independence Sri Lanka.

Rs. 160.00

Postage Extra.

US \$ 6.00



Marga Publications

61 Isipathana Mawatha
Colombo 5, Sri Lanka.

Cornered, the LTTE spots political space

NEWS
BACKGROUND

Mervyn de Silva

"Gee Prabhakaran: is the name of the game. Not quite as simple as 'Dead or Alive'. For both the Indian and Sri Lanka governments, this would be the single command to their respective negotiators who have been, and still are, busy trying to make a political deal with the LTTE leader. Mr. Gandhi's army hunting for Prabhakaran in the Vavuniya jungles has a choice no longer open to the Sri Lankan — to corner and kill him. But it is an option that Mr. Gandhi does not wish to exercise for strictly political reasons, of which the most important is the mood in Tamil Nadu, the manoeuvres by the major parties and personalities there and elections in that very important southern state, once the presidential rule imposed after the death of the charismatic Chief Minister MGR, is removed.

There is yet another, already scheduled event, which adds a touch of urgency. The All-India Congress Committee, the most powerful policy-making body of the ruling party, meets in Avadi. The town is close to the centre of Tamil Nadu politics, its capital Madras. "Nonsense — a typical journalistic over-reading of a routine meeting" a top South Block spokesman told this writer last week when I pointed out to two such interpretations in Delhi's Sunday papers. "The Indian government position is absolutely clear. Once the LTTE leader accepts the Accord, all other questions that are still worrying Prabhakaran can be resolved. The Prime Minister has said so, not once but many times, and I refer you to Mr. Natwar Singh's statement in the Rajya Sabha..."

If public statements were the final and irreversible positions of governments — any government — political life would indeed be so delightfully comfortable, and diplomacy would cease, with 'secret diplomacy' a melodramatic invention of the fiction-writer.

No. This is a political-military conflict, and has been so, ever since it became a serious threat to the Sri Lankan state. The Peace Accord, an inter-state transaction between two governments that had both divergent and common interests, was aimed at resolving the armed conflict in order to make way for the settlement of the far more complicated political issues.

The IPKF has broken the back of the LTTE resistance. The peninsula is no longer an undisputed LTTE stronghold where LTTE fighters have maximum mobility. On the contrary, the LTTE leader and hard-core group of trained and toughened guerrillas have been pushed south of the peninsula into the jungles. The occasional land-mine or ambush in the north does not challenge the IPKF claim of near-total military dominance of the peninsula and therefore a radical change in the balance of forces.

What has happened is that the IPKF hopelessly over-estimating its strength (and indeed, magnifying the importance of conventional military force, basic lessons of Vietnam and Afghanistan) has paid an unexpectedly large price for this enormous error of judgement — not just lives (over 400) but time.

However the back of the LTTE resistance to the IPKF has been broken, militarily. The proven and deadly capacity of the 'Tigers' to operate elsewhere, from Trincomalee southwards, is not proof to the contrary. In the fact, the operational methods as well as the targets (sudden, devastating raids on isolated villages, Sinhalese primarily) is convincing evidence of precisely this major change in the military situation.

If the military factor was the sole consideration in Indian policy, then the IPKF would continue its operations in the jungles, closing in on Prabhakaran and Mahacchaya and their 200-300 fighters. The LTTE leader's only objective would be to prevent such encirclement and slip out of the IPKF's ever-narrowing ring of armour.

It is at this point that politics take command, meaning of course, Tamil Nadu. (See "Save Prabha")

The Congress (I) had a small but secure political position in the largest of the states south of the Hindi belt, but only by the grace of M.G.R. The movie-star Chief Minister served an even more crucially important purpose. He kept the lid on Tamil chauvinism, represented by his chief rival Karunanidhi and his DMK.

With his death, the Congress was undecided about whom to back when MGR's AIADMK split.

And how! Between the quiet, respectable, not-so politically minded widow, Janaki, and MGR's one-time leading lady and comely mistress, Jayalalitha. After a swing towards Janaki, Congress soon picked Jayalalitha as the better bet. And then, Jayalalitha, finding that Karunanidhi was re-activating anti-Congress, anti-Centre Tamil nationalism, made a sudden tactical shift herself to keep up with the pace-setting Karunanidhi.

BUYING TIME

Mr. Gandhi bought himself time by imposing Presidential rule. He was hoping to use that breathing-space to exert Delhi's own considerable influence on the fast-moving post-MGR developments in a manner and direction best suited to the Centre's interests. However, his capacity to manage Tamilnadu politics in such a fashion has proved increasingly limited. That problem would not be a major worry had not a new challenge emerged at the Centre itself. The worsening Punjab situation has compelled him to strengthen his emergency powers, promptly provoking Opposition suspicious of a trend towards dictatorial rule and abuse of emergency, not to mention a misuse of the Constitution. The traumatic Indian experience with Mrs. Gandhi which led to her dramatic downfall in the late 1970's tends to magnify such Opposition anxieties, reflected now by the furious debate in the Indian press and in political circles about Mr. Gandhi's intentions.

OPPOSITION UNITY

The Opposition is still trying to get its act together. There are too many differences between the parties, and some bitter personal enmities. Yet, former Finance Minister V. P. Singh is steadily emerging as a credible challenger. He resigned over a series of scandals that involved intimate friends of Mr. Gandhi, notably India's top-star, Amitabh

Bachchan. He resigned his seat too. Now the Allahabad by-election approaches, in the very heart of the Hindi belt. The Opposition is trying to persuade Mr. Singh to contest him and the Congress is goading him to do so.

This is not a time for Mr. Gandhi to lose all control of Tamilnadu.

The IPKF has been punishing the LTTE hard. But the military campaign has a political objective — to persuade Prabhakaran, still the Tamil people's only 'hero', to accept a political deal, on terms much lower than his earlier demands but much better than Delhi's own initial offer. Essentially, this is not different from the stated aims of National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali, when he mapped out a strategy before Vadamarachi. Negotiate from a position of strength.

The IPKF has militarily weakened the LTTE. Who is to derive the benefits of that by negotiating the terms of a new political accord? India and the IPKF, which reduced the LTTE military capability, believe that the right to the rewards belongs exclusively to Delhi. Colombo however spots target of opportunity — to offer the LTTE a better deal than Delhi would. In essence, it is greater power for lesser land. Give monopoly control of the north to the LTTE on a platter (i. e. an interim administration and the LTTE in control when elections are held) in exchange for an LTTE concession in the East. The UNP and pro-LTTE, pro-UNP Tamils are trying to steal the fruits of the IPKF's eight month campaign. The UNP government too is thinking politically and electorally. Sinhalese opinion could be appeased if the North-East linkage is snapped. It is the 'merger' that really angers the majority of Sinhalese, not provincial councils.

For his part, Prabhakaran, the weakest of the three, sees a heaven-sent opportunity to enhance his bargaining power by exploiting the contest between India and Sri Lanka and their divergent interests.

The uncertain Tamilnadu situation and emerging Indo-Sri Lankan differences on the situation in the explosive eastern province, together with the immediate needs of Colombo and Delhi, along with their respective electoral concerns, have opened a "space" for the LTTE. But this 'space' may be open only for a limited time.

Letter. . .

(Continued from page 1)

in the North and East. The problem with Amir is that he totally ignored building up a support base in Jaffna but depended wholly on India. Any Tamil Militant group would hesitate to touch him if he had a genuine mass following. Even during the T.U.L.F. leadership's absence in Jaffna, Tamils demonstrated their anger at the Killing of former Uduvil M.P. Mr. V. Dharmalingam so explicitly that the Militants refrained from taking on moderate politicians thereafter.

But when the former District council chairman Mr. Nandarajah was killed recently there was no murmur from Tamils because the T.U.L.F. had exhausted all influence at mass level in Jaffna.

Now Amir has brought dishonour not only to the T.U.L.F. but to the Tamils in Sri Lanka. In this context it must be accepted that, despite his political inadequacies, Prabhakaran has provided unique leadership to the Tamil rebels.

P. Kirupananthan

Nelliady.

Lebanonisation — The East is Red

While the Sinhalese want the Sri Lankan army presence strengthened, the 'Tamil Tigers' want the Sri Lanka Army out, the Muslims want the IPKF out! The EPRLF and PLOT held a hartal in Batticaloa to commemorate the LTTE massacre of their cadres last year. The IPKF pulled down their black flags. A Muslim Deputy Minister's security officer has been abducted in Samanthurai. Meanwhile a 'Red Alert' has been announced in the deep South with the Security forces prepared for a major operation by "Southern subversives".

Maoisms are in order. Truly, there's Great Disorder under the heavens. More appropriate though is 'The East is Red'.

When Sri Lankan commentators in search of parallels at the height of the ethnic conflict and the Tamil separatist insurgency favoured Bangladesh and Cyprus the *Lankan Guardian* introduced the term 'Lebanonisation', the process rather than the country. At that time, there was no foreign peace-keeping force, only the Sri Lankan police and the Army, and later, the elite S.T.F., trained by hired ex-S.A.S. personnel and a motley international 'dogs of war' pack.

It was of course the ethnic composition of the eastern province — Tamils, the largest group but not a majority, the Tamil-speaking Muslims and the Sinhalese, the smallest group — which primarily encouraged such fearful, futuristic scenarios. At that time, the Muslim community seemed neutral and aloof, although the Tamils expected (or hoped) the link of language (not religion) to transcend religious differences and took Muslim support for granted. Besides the Muslims were not armed or even politically organised for a role in the raging conflict.

Sooner or later, Muslim involvement was inevitable — particularly

when Sinhalese "Home Guards" were introduced to protect Sinhalese villages. To use the Muslims as 'buffer' or better still as an instrument of the State's counter-insurgency strategy was a tactical conception. The tactic was in fact adopted. Arms found their way into the hands of Muslim youth, banding themselves into various groups bearing names distinctly Middle-eastern (fundamentalist or Palestinian) in flavour. The Muslims in Colombo, the pro-establishment traditionalist leadership and elite, business and professional, ignored the interests of their brothers rapidly drawn into the vortex of a highly complicated and violent situation. With the exception of Mr. Haleem Ishak, the Opposition's only Muslim MP and a few Muslim personalities of the Eastern province, the Muslim factor was totally neglected, by commentators of both the pro-Sinhala and pro-Tamil camps.

In March, well over a hundred civilians, mainly Sinhalese have been killed, presumably by the LTTE. But things are not all that simple. Small armed Muslim youth groups made their appearance until, finally, a new Muslim political party, east-based rather than Colombo-controlled, made its advent — the S. L. Muslim Congress. But all the MP's of the province are U. N. P. and therefore could only work within the government, and its national policy and military strategy in the east.

Came the Indian Peace-keeping Force which was soon to have a Muslim General in command of the area.

Old conflicts are now re-emerging and new, fierce antagonisms erupting in a province which became the main theatre of the war, once the LTTE's military dominance was broken in its authen-

tic northern stronghold. With the battle front of the IPKF and the LTTE shifting eastwards, the LTTE itself changed its tactics — to de-stabilise the situation, undermine the 'Accord' harass the IPKF militarily and embarrass the Sri Lanka government politically, this causing Colombo-Delhi friction.

The main target was Sinhalese villagers in the more remote, unpopulated settlements. The 'old war' of communal strife, with one critical difference, the LTTE is armed, the Sinhalese and Muslims have no protector" or do not trust the newly introduced 'protector', the IPKF. Add to these explosive ingredients, the natural discontent of a Sri Lankan army (100% Sinhalese) 'confined to barracks' under the Accord, humiliation for the army and a ready propagandist weapon for the anti-Accord groups, not merely the official Opposition.

The old conflicts are based mainly on land distribution and settlement policies, the cause of communal disturbances since the mid-1950's. Economic and political interests of the three communities, especially of the propertied and the commercial strata, sharpen the conflict as provincial councils and the sharing of political power become the main concerns. Besides, there is the vital political issue, — the proposed North-East merger for a trial one-year period. What will be this power-balance once the polls are held?

However the most emotionally charged issue is that of refugees and their re-settlement. It is an intensely human problem for all. It is also a political question for people in place mean voters, and therefore the communal balance of power, the power which is to be 'shared' in the new provincial council set-up, the first exercise in devolution,

'Save Prabhakaran' cry in Madras

A change in the perception of the Sri Lankan Tamils' issue by the DMK and some other opposition parties has at present narrowed it down to a question of survival of the LTTE supremo, Mr V. Prabhakaran.

The opposition refrain in Tamil Nadu is that Mr Prabhakaran's life is in danger from the Indian Peace Keeping Force. The DMK president Mr M. Karunanidhi and few other leaders have urged the Centre to save the life of Mr Prabhakaran for whom, according to them, a manhunt is on.

A "save Prabhakaran" march from here to Kanyakumari organised by the Confederation for the Protection of Tamils of Eelam, an organisation of writers, artistes and the like here, and the four-day march was flagged off by Mr Karunanidhi at Madras. He said that the Tamils had raised their voice against any harm coming to the LTTE chief and the voice would reach New Delhi.

The recent death of an LTTE leader, Mr Johnny in the jungles of Vavuniya, is sought to be linked to the IPKFs effort to capture Mr Prabhakaran. Mr P. Nedumaran, president of the Tamil Nadu Gandhi Kamaraj Congress, alleged that Mr Johnny was shot by the IPKF when he refused to lead army-men shadowing him to Mr Prabhakaran. Subsequently, the LTTE, in a statement released in Madras, held the Indian government responsible for Mr Johnny's death.

Such accusations have naturally annoyed the Congress leadership in Tamil Nadu. Its perception of the situation in Sri Lanka is quite different from that of the DMK and others who support its views. It has reasons to be annoyed because people are sceptical about the version of the happenings being given out offi-

cially. What is worse, even Ms. Jayalalitha, leader of a group of the AIADMK, has chosen to appeal to the Centre not to harm Mr Prabhakaran and initiate negotiations with the LTTE after stopping the IPKF action.

Mrs Janaki Ramachandran, leader of other AIADMK faction, who as chief minister of Tamil Nadu, professed total support to the Central government's action in Sri Lanka has radically changed her view. She and the leaders in her group hold views similar to those held by the DMK as they are angered at the Congress MLAs withdrawing support to her government during the crucial voting on confidence motion. Her government was dismissed two days later on January 30 and President's Rule imposed on the state.

The Congress leaders are quick to point out the killings of innocent civilians in the northern and eastern parts of Sri Lanka by militants. Among those killed were political leaders, including Mr Velmurugu, Mr Nataraja and Mr Anandasankari. They point out that while the IPKF carried out the job of disarming the militants, the defiant LTTE had been killing people. The Indian government had no intention to kill Mr Prabhakaran. It was not hunting for the LTTE leader, as alleged by the opposition parties they assert.

Mr V. N. Vishwanathan, another political scientist (asst. professor, Presidency College), said about a dozen organisations not affiliated to political parties had been formed in the state to focus attention on what was actually happening in Sri Lanka.

He felt the IPKF issue might prove a setback to the Congress in the elections to the assembly, if the issue was not solved by then.

(T. O. I.)

Half India wants troops pulled back, says poll

About half the number of people interviewed in India by a Marketing and Research Group (MARG) want the IPKF to come back from Sri Lanka. The figure was 49 percent. But 72 percent of those interviewed approved their government's action in sending Indian soldiers into Sri Lanka.

The opinion poll was commissioned by the news magazine *India Today* and ranged over 200 country-wide locations. The pollsters questioned 10,338 persons.

The over-all pattern of responses revealed that there is no great disparity among the Sri Lanka issue. In Tamil Nadu, only one percent more than in other regions wanted a pull-back of the troops.

Boycott till Wannigama is traced

Ruhuna University students are into a boycott of classes with they have declared will not be called off till the Government reveals the whereabouts of their missing philosophy lecturer Satyapala Wannigama. Wannigama was reported arrested by the Middeniya police last November.

The Students Action Committee has informed the campus authorities that they will boycott pending examinations too, if their demands are not met before these are held.

Among the other demands are: immediate release of students held in police custody; assistance to undergraduates who have become refugees; and, a satisfactory solution to the private medical college issue.

Question time in Parliament

The Israeli connection

(Mr. Lakshman Jayakody)

Mr. Deputy Chairman, I have given notice of two questions and I am very grateful to the Hon. Ministers for their presence here to answer them. They have been kind enough to come here to answer my questions.

My first question is addressed to the Hon. Minister of National Security. There was this agreement signed between Sri Lanka and India on 29th July, 1987 and in the Exchange of Letters it was said that they would re-examine the presence of foreign military advisors in our country and that they would take suitable action on this after the discussions which would take place between India and Sri Lanka.

Will the Hon. Minister kindly inform the House whether he has taken up this matter with the Government of India because apparently a couple of weeks ago — two or three weeks ago — His Excellency the President together with the Minister of National Security and the Minister of Mahaweli Development went to India to clarify certain matters pertaining to foreign military intelligence people in our country. I would like to know whether he did verify the presence and activities of the Israelis, the ex-SAS persons who are here and also the keen Meeni intelligence officers who are operating in this country. I recall that when we raised the matter about the Israeli presence here sometime ago, the Hon. Minister told us that there were Israelis here and that if there were any combat operations which took place in the country, that influence of the Israelis would be there. He said this some time ago. Apart from that, we mentioned the names of some Israelis who were operating here but the Hon. Minister did not reply.

I want to bring to the Hon. Ministers notice that there is an office called Kool Trades Colombo which operates from 22, Millagiriya Road, Bambalapitiya. There is an

Israeli gentleman by the name of Zvi Joseph who runs this trading office. But we found that they were not only a trading organisation but also a defence supplies unit for Hornets Limited of Tel Aviv, Israel. I want to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister that they are agents for a Singapore organisation who supply defence weapons and their LCs are opened through our own state trading organisations. They have imported some Italian guns — repeaters — whose the make and number of the gun have been scratched off. They are sold here through Kool Trades Limited.

I would like to ask the Hon. Minister whether he can give us a list of names of all the Israeli experts in the country. This is very important at a time like this. We should have the names of all their agricultural, economic and other experts. There are also Israeli technocrats, as you are aware. Almost all of them are in the Mahaweli area. They have already settled down in the Mahaweli area and are working in certain farms in the Mahaweli. There is a newspaper which is popular and quite well-known here called the "Israeli News". If you read it, you will find that most of them are here for this type of activity. I would like the Hon. Minister to check up whether these people are military men. In the Israeli set-up, you know that they are all militarily trained.

(Mr. Anura Bastian)

Have you given notice of this question?

(Mr. Lakshman Jayakody)

Oh, yes.

(Mr. Anura Bastian)

We have got notice of only one question.

(Mr. Lakshman Jayakody)

Anyway, I am now bringing this to your notice. I would like you to read the "Aquinas Journal"

which is printed by the Aquinas College. The last article in the journal is about the Israeli connection in Sri Lanka. From that you will know that it is not only we politicians who want to find out about this. The Aquinas College is a respected Catholic college. There are people who delve into foreign and political matters, matters pertaining to the presence of Israelis here, pertaining to the presence of other intelligence organisations here. Just read the last article. Then you will find what the Israeli connection is about in this country. I would like the Hon. Minister to publish the names and addresses so that the people of this country will know whether they are military advisors or not. This is rather important.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Air Mail

Canada / U.S.A. for 1 copy L/G
US\$ 50.00 for 1 year
US\$ 30.00 for 6 months

U.K., Germany, New Zealand
Australia, Netherlands, France,
Japan, Holland, Philippines, Aus-
tria, Norway, Sweden, China,
Ireland, Switzerland, Nigeria,
Belgium, Denmark, Paris, London
US\$ 40.00 for 1 year
US\$ 25.00 for 6 months

Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Du-
bai, Bahrain, Arabian Gulf
Syria, Singapore.
US\$ 35.00 for 1 year
US\$ 20.00 for 6 months

India, Pakistan,
US\$ 30.00 for 1 year
US\$ 17.00 for 6 months

Local
Rs. 140/- for 1 year
Rs. 75/- for 6 months

Opposition urges lifting of ban

Seven political parties have urged President Jayewardene to lift the ban on the JVP, unconditionally.

The parties are the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the Eksath Lanka Jatika Party, the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna, the Tamil Congress, the Democratic Workers Congress, the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and the Liberal Party.

They have also called for a release of all political prisoners held under the PTA and the Emergency regulations, and for an end to "extra-judicial killings and arbitrary arrests.

In a letter to the President these opposition parties have demanded in addition a lifting of the bans on proscribed trade unions and student organisations.

Among the other demands:

— Gazette the names of persons who have been detained, and if any have been released, the names of those released;

— Disband ad hoc para military forces such as Home Guards, National Auxilliary Force, National Task Force, Special Task Force, and retain only duly established security forces.

The opposition parties have asked for a parliamentary select committee on human rights to inquire into allegations of disappearances, and the setting up of a human rights commission drawn from all recognised political parties and human rights organisations.

The United Socialist Alliance (USA) of the CP, LSSP, SLMP and NLSSP too had been asked to come in on this joint opposition demand. But there had been no response' according to a spokesman for the seven parties.

Victory for Lankan in race case

When Dr Malila Noone, a Sri Lankan microbiologist, was interviewed by the appointments committee at Ashford Hospital, near London, for a consultant's post, the proceedings were "little more than a sham", an industrial tribunal held when Noone was not selected.

The tribunal held that the appointments committee which decided that Noone would not fit into the department, had "shown patent arbitrariness and unfairness" and had treated her less favourably than a British applicant with the same experience, training, qualifications and personality would have been.

In refusing Noone the consultant's post, for which she was the most highly qualified candidate, the Regional Health authority was guilty of racial discrimination the tribunal decided.

Now the Court of Appeal has upheld this decision and on March 17 awarded Dr Malila Noone 3,000 pounds sterling, as compensation for being racially victimised in that interview in 1984.

Malila Noone (44) qualified as a doctor at the University of Sri Lanka in 1967 and went to England in 1976 to complete specialist training in microbiology.

VIJAY

*You sensed the pale Galileen at your side
(He walked in Spain, he rose with Stalingrad)
The dripping Fascist fangs that tore your throat
Tore also his calm hands that only blessed. In the sad
Cycle of time comes the resurrection. Let us bide
The slow tortured turn from the mad
Night of malevolence to love again.
So,
With your chosen love, your warm heart calls us
As we march this May she will proclaim
Fulsome the grace of surging, risen, feet,
While echoes of earlier, happier, Mays remain.
We will trample on the grass the fallen gold of April
And May will put out its scarlet flambouyants
And the red banners that kindled your eyes.*

U. Karunatilake

PLO issue: 148 vs 2 (U. S. — Israel)

FOREIGN
NEWS

NEW YORK

Angry diplomats from the developing world were talking about shifting the venue of the next annual session of the U. N. General Assembly from the USA amidst a raging controversy over Washington's moves to close the Palestine Liberation Organization's (PLO) observer mission here reports PTL.

A long and complex legal battle is expected in a New York court where the Reagan Administration filed a suit seeking the closure of the 13-year old U. N. mission of the PLO which has been declared a terrorist organization by the U. S. Congress.

The United Nations will participate in the court proceedings supporting the PLO.

The isolation of the USA on the issue was once again underlined by the overwhelming support recet-

ved by a resolution tabled by India and 54 other countries which was adopted by the General Assembly to deplore the U.S. action.

A total of 148 nations voted for the resolution and only the USA and Israel were against it. The General Assembly decided it is too late to shift the venue for the special disarmament session.

Before the Assembly voted on the resolution, Zimbabwe, the current chairman of the non-aligned movement said the issue was one of compliance with international law.

The USA was taking a "retrograde step", the Zimbabwean Ambassador, Mr. I. S. G. Mudenge told the Assembly on behalf of the movement.

The USA said it was proud to be host to the U. N. and assured the world body that no further steps to close the mission would

be taken until the New York court had taken a decision on the suit filed by the Reagan Administration.

The PLO Observer Mr. Z. L. Telzi said that PLO had received summons from the New York court giving it 20 days to leave. The PLO would not disregard the summons but would tell the court that it was a dispute between the USA and the U. N. which could be settled only under the agreement they had signed in 1947, he said.

Recalling that the USA had asked the court not to allow the PLO to maintain telephone or utility services, Mr. Telzi told the Assembly, "Of course, we will use pigeons or smoke signals."

Cyprus: hope and division

The importance of the Cyprus presidential election result lies not so much in whom the voters chose, by such a narrow margin, but in what they rejected. In the first round the electorate unexpectedly eliminated Mr. Spyros Kyprianou, President for the past decade. In the second round between the two candidates who had done best in the first, it also disposed of Mr. Glafkos Clerides, the veteran protagonist of the right wing, despite his lead in round one, and elected Mr. George Vassiliou, an independent of minimal political experience backed by the Left. Since the eventual winner came second in the first ballot, the result of the run-off can hardly be seen as a decisive personal triumph for a relatively unknown quantity.

The outcome can only mean that the Greek Cypriot majority in the divided island has begun to feel

the draught created by a world ready to move on from a political pattern which seemed, until a few weeks ago, to have been set in concrete by the events of 1974. In that year the Greek colonels staged a coup which unseated Archbishop Makarios as President of the entire island. This precipitated the invasion of the north by the Turkish Army, which has been there in numbers ever since, and in 1983 the foundation of the 'Republic of Northern Cyprus' presided over by Mr. Rauf Denktaş. This minstate has proved to be an economic disaster and has failed to gain diplomatic recognition from any country except Turkey.

But there have been signs of a softening towards the break-away state by some western nations impatient with a problem which has adverse implications for Nato and the EC. More recently Greece and Turkey,

which came close to war over Cyprus, began a new dialogue at a meeting between their prime ministers. Mr. Kyprianou meanwhile had become trapped in a time-warped labelled 1974. He was unable to accept that demanding Turkish withdrawal as a precondition for a settlement had, after 13 years, lost the relevance it had in the immediate aftermath of invasion. The Turks proved immovable, and Mr. Kyprianou's rejection last year of UN proposals for a federated state, which had come close to success, only made an agreement even less likely.

The outgoing President appears to have been punished for his lack of new ideas while Mr. Clerides, a veteran of past inter-communal talks, seems to have been remembered for their failure rather than for his promise to start new ones. The millionaires (Continued on page 24)

BUY

REYNOLDS

Ball Point Pens

For Fine Writing instruments

Penpals Limited

545, Sri Sangaraja Mawatha,
Colombo - 10.

Tel: Nos. **547717 — 21668 - 9**

The plight of people in the Eastern Province

Film-maker speaks

I am Dharmasiri Bandaranayake.

Theatre and film are my chosen forms of expression.

I am trying through the medium of film to bring to people a consciousness of the terrible war that has been raging in our country and of the monstrous inhumanity and the suffering that accompanied it. How did the war affect the lives of ordinary people? — this is what I am trying to depict through the realities that I have been able to capture on the screen. For this purpose we chose those parts of the country where the war was fought — the North and East — the territory where these harsh and brutal events took place, and we decided to go there to discover the facts.

It is not only homes, lands and property that are destroyed by war. It is also men's minds that are ravaged by it. It is not only the bodies of people that are destroyed but also the human spirit. The journey on which we have come to explore this human cost of the war has been an arduous one. Today we have reached the Batticaloa district.

Today is the 29th of November, 1987. From now on we shall be engaged in a tour of the district to make our record of the facts.

We had intended on completing our report on the Batticaloa district to begin our observations in the Trincomalee district, when suddenly the peace that had been restored in that district was unexpectedly shattered by dreadful events. Since entering the Trincomalee district at that time was fraught with risks, we changed our course for Kolumuni. Here we had to face the hostility of certain militant youths. Having travelled through Samundurai, Ampari and Aranthalaya, our team set out on October 6th for Jaffna. Early that morning not only the North but also the ports of the Eastern province that we had visited were engulfed by violence. With the escalation of this violence, we were able to progress only as far as Killinochchi. The wave of destruction had by now reached Varuniya. We gave up our intention of travelling to Jaffna and turned back towards Anuradhapura. At Mankulam we were confronted by armed Tamil militants. Like ill-fated ones grateful for the preservation of their lives, our team were able to reach Anuradhapura.

We recorded on the way the experiences of refugees who were streaming from the Trincomalee district, leaving their homes and lands in terror of violence, and got to Kantalei.

We completed the film without being able to include in it the experiences of people in the Northern Province, and this was due to the chaotic situation in the province. We are uncertain even whether some of the communities who have been the subject of our record are still living in those areas. The death of the G. A., Batticaloa who spoke to our camera strengthens that sense of uncertainty.

1st Bhikkuni

What could be done?

2nd Bhikkuni

My son-in-law and grandson were shot. They died.

Old man (refugee)

The Tigers Killed three people. They opened fire and the children died. This was at Morawewa. For fear of the Tigers we ran away. The next day we barely saved our lives.

Monk

Being a refugee is a wretched condition for anybody — Sinhala, Tamil or Muslim. If you go into a refugee camp you will understand this clearly. A human being has certain essential human rights but in a refugee camp he loses all these. They lose their culture, they lose everything they have. The behaviour of refugees, the character of their life in the environment in which they have to live, exerts its influence to some extent on those outside the camp. As I see it, refugees live as they have to, not in a way that is regarded as civilised; they can't live or dress or move about in the way that other people do. They have to live in a limited space, under restricted conditions, huddled together. Their state of mind changes in a terrible way — not only that of adults but also of children — it degenerates in a shocking way. On seeing this transformation in the moral condition of refugees, the condition of the people outside also changes. I regard this as a tragic phenomenon. No human being should become a refugee. But today in Sri Lanka, many people — Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims — have become refugees.

Monk

In 1982 there were troubles in this area — mainly Muslim-Tamil conflicts. The Sinhalese here are mostly traders — there are also drivers and technicians. Although there were conflicts between Tamils and Muslims, the Sinhalese did not get involved. In 1986 August when there was violence, Tamil people came to the temple for protection and we sheltered them. If Muslims and come, we would have done the same for them, but they didn't come. The Sinhalese didn't take sides, therefore we didn't have any trouble from either Tamils or Muslims. At present there are only 17 Sinhalese families here. I don't believe we will suffer any harassment, because even in time of riots and right up to today friendly relationships continue. There were some letters being circulated, asking Sinhala and Muslim people to get out. When we inquired, the Tamil groups said they had nothing to do with it, that some anonymous people must have done it to disturb the existing good relations, and they asked us not to go.

Eastern University Student

We can hear the sound of gunfire from the University hostel and even from the University. To study you need a peaceful atmosphere. Students can be called the backbone of the country. There are eight universities in the country, but unfortunately the students in the Eastern University don't get the support of students in Peradeniya and Colombo — I have to say this with regret.

CMC Bandara

Let us look at this question from the standpoint of community development. The aim of community development is to get poor people together to co-operate on the basis of their own resources for economic and social development. But there is a big problem when there is a complicated and insecure situation. Our experience in Anuradhapura is that when we go to places further to the north, there is no favourable situation for getting together with people and discussing their social and

economic problems because of the state of insecurity which they feel. All we have to talk to them about is how to protect their lives.

Monk

My experience in this area is that there was a struggle which can be called a struggle of oppressed people to protect their heritage. But we have to accept the fact that as a result, another group of oppressed people became victims of inhuman oppression of various kinds. In this situation the fact that the State institutions did not protect the Sinhalese who were a minority in this district led to villages and temples being destroyed.

Mother

As a result of the events in January we came to this temple. My husband was dead. We had nowhere to live. The education of the children was interrupted. Now my four children are in four different places.

Girl

I lived first in Batticaloa, in the Sinhala village of Jayanthipura. Then the Tiger troubles began. About the same time my father died. Mother found it difficult to look after us, so we had to separate. Only one of us children is in Batticaloa. Mother is in a temple there. Because I have to study I came here, to the home of one of my mother's friends. What I hope to do is to study and do job.

Monk :-

After these refugees left their villages and homes and came to the camp, we have to say that they became homeless a second time. When their children went to school the other children began to discriminate against them because they were refugees.

Mother

They said they couldn't take my child into the school here. So I entered him into the school at Senapura. But he doesn't go more often than once a month. That is because the other children beat him. They call him a refugee

and hit him on the way back from school. Even when he goes to bathe the same thing happens.

Monk

Though we have tried to help the refugees by setting up welfare societies and dhamma schools, their primary needs have not been met. They have lost their villages and lands, some have lost children, others parents. I know one refugee mother who had given birth to her baby in the jungle. When we set up associations, preach dhamma, organise religious activities for people who are in such a wretched condition, it is questionable how far their basic needs are met.

Indignant man

We were delivered to the refugee camp on July 23rd, 1983 by the army. This was the first refugee camp to be started, and it was opened on that day. Up to today we have no home. We don't talk because of our pain of mind. The Government tells us, 'Go back to where you were'. If we don't do so, we won't get rations, we won't get coupons, we won't get anything, so because we have to exist, we go back. Then in a week or so, the Tigers hit us again. Of the six people in the family who are left, only one or two will survive, or all six will die. That's what will happen. They sit in their chairs, but innocent people die. They give us food, keep us in refugee camps, children get corrupted, become uncivilised, every kind of vice exists in the camps. There aren't just 150 people, there are thousands here. There are no toilets, no place to cook, no place to bathe. How can people live like animals?

Monk

If there are refugees, there is also a group of people who are happy that they should continue to be in that situation. Why? So that they themselves can profit from the refugees, exhibit the sufferings of the refugees to the world and fill their own pockets. There are such people in this society at various levels, they receive publicity and help from

everybody, and maintain their luxurious life by this means. It is very important to say this. Because of them we can't have peace. It is these people who pass us heroes. They act on the footing that war is necessary, they incite the people to war, they publicise the miserable condition of refugees through the media, they rouse the feelings of the people; but they don't care that as a result many thousands of people more become refugees, that they will be brought to destruction, lose their limbs, lose their lives. Those people are concerned only with their self-interest.

Indignant men

To whom can we talk? There is nobody to talk to. If a gentleman like you comes, you will write something in the newspapers. Somebody who sees it will feel sorry—that's all.

Monk:-

The people who came to the Senapuram camp from the North and East were mostly young men and women. In particular, the young women were in a majority. At the time the camp was started, some people in the area around began to haunt this place in the hope of satisfying some needs of their own. They came to these people who had lost their homes and property, who came here only with the clothes that were on their backs, and tried to use them for their own satisfaction.

Man

They come here in the night. The gentlemen get some women down when they want to, the watchers too when they want to that is what happens. Meanwhile they give us a little of the food and materials and sell the rest.

Monk

Drinking increased in this camp. People of the area spoke about this in various ways. Some said that the refugees had lived in their own villages in an illbred manner, and that they were trying to maintain that way of life here. They said 'Let's drive them out',

and began to act against the refugees. Others tried to use the situation to make money by selling liquor. Meanwhile it must be said, even regretfully, that some refugees found relief from their emotional distress in drinking, so much had their lives been disoriented.

Man

Although we came to Borapala from Aranthalava, Borapala is a big village, it is thickly populated. There is no land for people who have come from Aranthalava to cultivate. But they were afraid to go back to their own homes in Aranthalava because of the lack of security. If there is in Aranthalava a police station or army camp, people will be willing to go back to their places of habitation.

Women

We can't go back to Aranthalava and live there in our fear and hardship and grief.

Women with child

We would like to return home, if we are given security. But we have to stay in the house at night alone, we have to go to market to the town alone; the army won't be accompanying us.

Man

We know what happened to us. We don't want to die, we have dependents for whose sake we have to live. If we who were there originally don't go back, nobody will. Will you gentlemen go? If you are ready to go, I will come too. But you won't go. It's we who will die.

Monk

That is really a tragic story. So my one request is that before anything is done to rehabilitate the refugees, we should understand their real condition, understand why they became refugees, under what kind of system they can be rehabilitated, honestly we must consider all these before we act. That will be for the benefit of the refugees themselves and for the people of this country generally.

Monk

What is most serious is this hollowness and lack of purpose. That is what rules everything in today's world. If at any time a majority says that war is necessary then everybody will say that war is necessary. Whether war is good or bad, what will be its consequences, what are the dangerous situations that will result, what dreadful impact it will have on their fellow citizens—none of this do they consider. War is necessary, they say, they bless the war, they bless those who are pledged to the war, they are incited to war and they cry to incite the whole people to war; but they do this not because war is necessary but because of their hollowness. On the other side they talk about peace. If a majority talks of peace then these same people, talk on the side of peace. But peace is not necessary to them either. They talk of peace, they agitate for peace, they act for peace, but they don't understand how peace can be brought, about or how war comes about. Many people—the majority—of those who talk in this fashion don't understand either the terrible nature of war or the importance of peace, nor is it important for them to know, they are only concerned with their profit and their interests, and whether they agitate for war or for peace, they do for their personal benefit.

Refugees

They are attacking us!
That is why we are going!
We want to have our lives!

Middle-aged lady

Aiyol my son, you went to work—you never came back! What happened to you, my son? They shot you and killed you, no, my son! My darling son! As you ran, they shot you and killed you, no, my son!

Woman

My husband was working at Serendib. When we came back he had been shot by the Security Forces. I never got my husband's body.

Woman

I didn't get my husband's body. At six or six-thirty in the evening they carried away on a tractor his corpse and that of the other workers including his brothers they had shot — I don't know where they took them.

Women

3 persons came and took my husband away and shot him dead. They killed my husband that way! I have three children. They killed my husband too like that!

Women

We ran! Then we waited outside. Then we went to the school and stayed there. Then they were going to start school so they told us to get out. After that we were given a little money. With that money we put together a few things like sticks and built shelters. It was only after the commandos left that we came back.

Tamil wife

My husband is seriously injured because he was hit thrice by gunfire. One shot hit the shoulder. He can't do any work with his hands. He can't do a job. He still goes to the hospital. They x-ray him. We kept him a month and a half in hospital. We cut some bits of wood. After that we got a little money. With that money we put together these huts. When the commandos came we left the village. When we came back we saw only our land. Nothing was left of our huts.

Burgher woman

My name is R. Outschoorn. When my son went out to play in the Karuppan playground, on September 2nd 1976, he was shot dead by the Army; His body wasn't handed over to us. Our whole family lived by his labour. I have two daughters and two sons. We all lived on the earnings of my son who's now dead. My husband has asthma and has no livelihood. Now we are in great hardship.

Mother's Front

I am speaking on behalf of the Batticaloa District Mother's Front. I am Vellakutti Suvendradevi. We formed this Front in order to cope with the repression by the Forces which we had to meet by day and night. There are thousands of widows in this Front. There are other widows too, but we have no means of talking to them or making contact with them. Also there are thousands of mothers who have lost their sons.

When it was impossible for young people to go about on the streets our Mothers Front conducted agitation. We had demonstrations. Through them we had success in certain ways. When the forces were going about the streets day and night, we tried to protect our young people from them. On 3/ 12/ 1986 my husband was arrested by the forces at home. We went after them to the camp and asked for his release. They said they could give a reply only in three or four days. But in the end I learnt my husband was dead. There are thousands of young women in this district like me who have lost their husbands. There are mothers who have lost their children. It was because of this repression suffered by us from the forces that our Mothers' Front continues to be active.

Some time ago when there was an armed conflict between two of the militant groups we carried out a successful agitation and demonstration against it. We gained victory by these demonstrations.

Priest

In the Batticaloa district rich parents sent their sons to Europe as refugees.

Middle class parents sent sons to Sinhala areas or to India. But there is a substantial number of poor people in this area. If we consider the economy of the region about 60 per cent live by fishing or farming. A situation arose in which farmers couldn't cultivate and fishermen couldn't go out to sea. Because of this

the common people in this district were very hard pressed.

Tamil fisherman

I live in the Vavunadi area and my name is Mailvaganam. Several men came and shot at us while we were fishing. We lay there unable to do anything. The people in the village took us to hospital. Because I was injured by gunfire I find it difficult to move my arm. With one leg too I have the same difficulty.

The people of this village are fishermen or live by manual labour. In 1986 the forces established a camp here, and chased all of us out. After that we lived in the refugee camp. Almost all our fishing boats were smashed by the forces.

Muslim fisherman

We are fishermen of Marathamune. We are in a situation of not being able to carry on our livelihood properly because of the disturbances. On the other side we are pressed by the Tamils. We can't send the fish we catch to Colombo. Since we can't sell most of the fish we catch we dry them. All of us in this village live under very great difficulties.

Muslim fisherman

We are people of a fishing village living in great difficulty. Opportunities of making a living are very limited. Particularly because of the clashes between Muslim and Tamil people there was a situation where Tamils couldn't go to Tamil villages. The State didn't give us any help. Particularly from Fisheries Department we didn't get any co-operation. Both the Tamil people and the Muslim people are engaged in fishing. You will see that this is an occupation involving much hardship and suffering. Particularly after the clashes between Muslim and Tamils there is a very difficult state of affairs in this district.

Muslim Peace Committee

If there is to be peace, all the arms in the possession of Tamils should be taken over. As long as these arms are there, it will

be impossible to ensure peace. Tamil youths try to take up arms over any matter. My opinion is that the main thing the Peace Keeping Force should do is to take over all the arms in the hands of the Tamil people in this area.

Mr. Aziz

In our region most of the paddy fields are in Tamil areas. Most of those who work in these fields are our Muslim brothers. They have worked for a long time and continue to do so. Because of various events they are in a state where they can't carry on their work properly and efficiently. Those who have been made especially insecure are our poor Muslim cultivators. The young men have suffered misfortunes. The Muslim and Tamil students have been most exposed to these pressures. They go to school in great fear.

Muslim girl student

Those of us who travel to school over long distances can't come in time when there are such actions as hartals. Things are such that our schools are closed for considerable periods. Because we haven't been able to attend school systematically our education has been disrupted. Even in our homes we can't study. There are shocks. We live in a situation in which there is no suitable atmosphere or mental condition for study. We live in extreme fear and disorientation.

Muslim male student

We are in a situation where we can't come to school. Education is disrupted by hartals. When we come to school some militant groups send us back home by force. For those reasons our education has been entirely broken up. The next problem is that our parents are farmers, and when some action takes place when they are going to work in the fields, they return home.

Muslim male student

Concerning science students, there are no teachers. The essential materials and equipment are not there. This has happened as

a result of the ethnic conflict. We face the handicap of being unable to do science experiments.

Muslim teacher

In learning practical science students have to perform certain experiments. We can't take them for field work. We are in the very distressing situation of having to limit our students to the education we can give them in the classroom — and that too in great fear.

Muslim girl student

We don't get our essential textbooks at the proper time. Because the State has difficulties in sending equipment and books in time owing to the ethnic conflict, we get them belatedly. Because of hartals and other obstacles we can't get to school on time. For these reasons our education has been almost totally disorganised.

Tamil girl students

In normal times we had no fear when we came to school. But after the events of July 1983 there was a great change in our student life. We have faced that situation and those changes. We are now accustomed to this life.

It is in extreme fear that we come to school. Now that has become part of our normal existence. Since 1984 we come to school or go back home in that state of fear.

From 1983 to 85, 86 we didn't take part in any activities outside the classroom. We didn't take part in sports.

In the past what we regarded as a harsh sound was only the bursting of crackers. But now what we hear often is the sound of gunfire. Because of this we are in great fear, under mental stress. We are not in a mental condition or atmosphere favourable for learning.

We come to school in the hope of learning. But because of the terrifying sounds that break out we are denied the peaceful atmosphere necessary for study. What are they doing outside, what is

happening there — it is in this mental anxiety that we have to learn.

When shots are heard or there's a round up our mothers tell us not to go to school.

Even when we make an effort to study at home, we hear the sounds of guns and shells. We just go to bed. We are in a position where we can pursue education neither at school nor at home. We have to pay our education has been entirely disrupted.

Tamil male student

We have suffered considerable difficulties at the hands of the forces, which can't be described. When travelling by bus students have had troubles. On 28th January 1985 I was arrested. I was taken to the police station. I was harassed, tormented, beaten, kept in the police station for three days. I was given undue punishment, beaten for no cause. We were in no fit mental state to come to school and learn. From time to time when we were travelling by bus, we were made to get down and harassed in the name of carrying out searches.

Nun

These little children came to us at the time there were these problems, and they have stayed with us. The children have been here because they would have been exposed to certain situations when the commandos came at that time. We protect them. However many children come, we hope to look after them.

Nun and child (Tamil)

Are your parents living? No.

How did you come here?

My elder sister brought me.

Where are your mother and father?

The boys shot them dead.

Our father and mother and everybody in the family were taken by the forces.

The women were separated, and the men were shot.

(Continued on page 24)



A unified and unique contribution through diversification

The Browns Group of Companies cover almost every aspect of trade, industrial and agricultural development in Sri Lanka. With the accent on Group Progress through diversification and specialisation, each Member of Associate Company is equipped to provide services and goods of the highest standard. Yet the Group, as a whole, is based on a concept of unified service, which assures you of the overall benefits of its combined resources.

THE BROWNS GROUP OF COMPANIES

481, Darley Road, Colombo 10. P. O. Box 200, Tel. 597111

AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY, ENGINEERING, TRANSPORT,
TOURISM, EXPORTS, TRADE.

Dharmasiri Bandaranayake's 'ECHOES OF WAR': Peace, Please

Jayadeva Uyangoda

In a situation of war, usually one party may win while the other may logically lose. Or in a state of military stalemate, no clear winner or loser may emerge. However, when a war is started, no matter whether it is ended or continued, there is a definite loser who ironically, is not a willing party to what Clausewitz called conducting politics through other means. It is the ordinary people—men and women, young and old, poor and powerless—fall tragic victims to the ravages of war. The war is not their creation, and it is not wanted by them either. Yet, it is they who lose their fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, children and babies. It is their houses that are destroyed, their livelihood that is shattered, and their minds, in constant fear for life, that have to bear the tremendous shock of death and devastation. And it is this very same innocent people who are there to accept the ultimate insult of being herded into the hellish existence of what is termed in a surgically unsentimental discourse as 'refugee camps'.

All this sounds like too obvious doesn't it? We all know that a civil war is not like a beauty contest in a five star hotel. There hasn't been any war anywhere without death and destruction to civilian life and property. Forget not, we live in Colombo, several hundred miles away from the site of the 'terrorist war' and refugee camps. Oh well, we can go to Coffee Mornings at Hilton and make contributions to refugee funds. Who says then that we are not concerned with the plight of our Sinhala, Tamil, Muslims and Burgher brothers and sisters in Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Mullativu, Jaffna, Vavuniya and Senapura?

Well, a young man from Colombo could make us think otherwise. That we in a cooler climate in the South are appallingly ignorant of the 'most inhumane injustices

of war' (සුදුසුම දරි දරුණුම අත්විඳීම) that has been going on beyond Malwatu Oya and Amban Ganga of our resplendent island. This he does quite effectively through a medium which he calls his chosen mode of self-expression. The young man who can disturb our comfortably-settled peace of mind is Dharmasiri Bandaranayake, the playwright and the film maker. His medium is a documentary film, approximately one-hour long, entitled *Yuadha Pratirava* (Echoes of War).

As his own narration at the beginning of the film tells us, Dharmasiri went to Batticaloa in September last year to record

the idea of the film and then directed it, sitting on a mile post right below the sign board 'Batticaloa' and explaining his purpose of making this cinematic effort. In a sombre tone, he tells us that his intention is to make a film that depicts the war, the enormous destructive power of war and how the war just crushes not only human life and material property, but also the spiritual being of the people. The sight and sound of his narration is interspersed with that ubiquitous symbol of war—roaring military trucks speeding away down the deserted highway. Then the 'stills' of dead and maimed bodies, ruined houses and bazaars, and

ECHOES OF WAR: Documentary, available in Sinhala, Tamil and English. Directed by Dharmasiri Bandaranayake. Produced by the Committee for Rational Development.

how peace was settling down in the troubled Eastern Province. It was September 1987, and it shouldn't have been a particularly cruel month of the year. The Indo-Lanka peace accord had been signed only two months ago. What else but peace could one expect amidst post-accord euphoria that swept across our hearts and minds? But for Dharmasiri and his crew, the anticipated peace was just not there to record on the video-tape. Instead, they were confronted with the reality of the sad aftermath of a cruel and destructive war. Accordingly, Dharmasiri recorded what he saw and heard: physical and spiritual destruction fallen upon entire communities of people. And in this shared fate of misfortune and injustice, race, religion and caste seem to be totally immaterial.

The opening scene of this documentary shows us Dharmasiri Bandaranayake, who has conceived

men and women weeping, present us with a collage of a life stilled by "an inhuman and unjust war." The little breathing space of peace that came a little after July last year was then shattered and the war was back again with its characteristic power of devastation. Dharmasiri doesn't deal with any of these events as such. Instead, his area of focus is the plight of the ordinary people who had been caught in a terrible war the rationale for which they just cannot comprehend. Then using the interview technique, and allowing the faces and voices of people to tell us the stories of their agony and suffering, Dharmasiri carries his camera to refugee camps, school, bazaars, temples and churches etc., in their collective and moving plea for peace and justice, men and women speak through their own horrendous experiences. There are Tamil families who escaped to the jungle to save their lives from the state

armed forces. There are Sinhala families who suffered at the hands of Tamil militants. And a Burgher family from Batticaloa has lost all the menfolk. There are little children who have lost their parents, wives their husbands, mothers their sons, boys and men their limbs. There are also entire families — Sinhala, Muslim and Tamil — who just don't have any means of livelihood. Some children complain of their education being disrupted. Even when the schools are in session they hear the gun fire, and not the voices of their teachers. And their are that category of men and women whom demographers in Colombo would describe in their census reports as 'refugees.' Refugees uprooted from their villages and homes, forced to accept the tortuous reality of living in adrift sans their immediate kith and kin, and then persuaded by the state to go back to where they came from only to be the targets again of the self-same war which has already rendered them homeless. Or, as one refugee mother tells us with well-measured anger, to be subject to the ultimate insult and condemnation, directed by the 'unaffected', of being called *anathya* — the REFUGEE in a social derogatory sense. In a dramatic scene in the film — although this film is about war, Dharmasiri carefully avoids drama, high or melo — an aged peasant, now rendered refuge-less, confronts the film crew on the very question of 'returning to home.' "The government want us to go back to our villages. Yet the Tigers are everywhere. How can anyone go back? Will you gentlemen risk your life to go to Vavuniya, Aranthalawa, Trincomalle etc.?" For the peasant from Aranthalawa, the gentle film maker only symbolizes the decision makers in Colombo who appear to think that what matters in resettling the refugees is well-argued administrative decisions and reports. Will the gentlemen of the latter kind ever learn that the refugees too love, and fear for their life, or rather whatever still remains of it?

Who are these refugees anyway? In the film, Fr. M. C. Fernando

of Batticaloa offers an insightful analysis. He talks mainly of the refugees in the Eastern Province. The rich and the middle class, according to Fr. Fernando, have already left the area and some have even left for foreign lands. When the war came, those who had remained there were only the poor; the peasants, the fisher-folk, the day-laborers and the unemployed. Once the military offensive started, they couldn't earn their living anymore. They had no alternative but to join the refugee camps. And those who had remained in the villages fell targets to the guns of both parties in the war. The interviews that Dharmasiri has conducted in this film substantiates Fr. Fernando's point. Most of the civilian victims of this war are very, very poor people. And the poor, in the midst of a war acquire just another name tag: the refugee. Incidentally, the situation in the Jaffna Peninsula may be somewhat different in this regard. The social dialectic of war there has put the rich and the poor, and the *Brahmin* and the *sudra* alike, into the same refugee camps. Both the illustrious and the colie there had to wait in line to receive the equally allotted food ration from the Indian army. The steam-roller of war produces its own ironies!

Yet, what are the conditions inside the refugee camps? Some of our journalists in Colombo recently crossed the Beira Lake and told us the situation at the Singithi Uyana — turned — refugee camp. Yet, we still know very little about the condition in the North and the East, except through some newspaper accounts that boarder ethnic sensationalism. Dharmasiri Bandaranayake is different in that he does not give into sensational reporting. He takes his camera to the midst of refugees and without any editorial comments or paraphrasing allows them to speak for themselves. What comes up in this account of the life inside refugee camps is a deeply humanistic self-reflection on the part of the subjects of the refugee status, though in the language and idiom of the unsophisticated.

The elderly peasants and the young Buddhist monks talk about the dehumanizing force that surrounds the life in refugee camps and the social wickedness and hypocrisy that hastens the spiritual degeneration of the inmates. Although it is not an appropriate parallel, one is here reminded of Bruno Benthelheim's insightful account of the struggle for survival in German concentration camps during the Second World War.

By depicting the frightening aftermath of a particularly nasty war, Dharmasiri Bandaranayake by no means wants us to indulge in an exercise of collective masochism. The singlemost achievement of the entire film is its message of peace. With all the technical drawbacks of the film — this writer, by the way, deliberately refrains from discussing purely technical or artistic shortcomings of the documentary — the narrative brilliance of Dharmasiri emerges when he lets three young Buddhist monks speak their mind and heart, without presenting his own findings or 'conclusions'. Here are three witnesses to all these disaster, misfortune and agony. Being the members of the clergy, they are conscious of their social duties, and indeed they have helped the refugees amidst danger and difficulties. Yet, their voice is not of the militarism and fanaticism, is in the case of some of their priestly brethren in the distant metropolis, but one of passionate, and reasoned plea for peace. Among the three, Rev. Mawathagama Gunananda of Senapura presents the image of a Buddhist monk who, after witnessing the suffering fellow humans caught in a senseless war, has attained a kind of spiritual enlightenment. Like the monk Mizushima in Michio Takeyama's movingly anti-war novel (later made into an inspiring film) *HARP OF BURUMA*, Rev. Gunananda has seen death of the shocking kind, but still has an enormous faith in life. Yet, he yearns for life without war. He exposes the hypocrisy of those who just clamour for peace, but in reality promote and spread war. What

Is the point in preaching *Dhamma* and organising *Sil* campaigns when the refugees are thrown into an animal-like existence in camps? asks he. "It is a vicious cycle," says Rev. Gunananda. "Those who come to help and rehabilitate the refugees are the very people who, in the first place, created refugees. And those who talk about peace are the very people who bless the war. They speak of peace only for the sake of war. And they never want to tell the people of the horrors of war and the need for peace. They use the mass media and all other resources to propagate war, not peace. The other two monks, Revs. Mahamankadawala Piyaratana of Eppawala and Melsiripura Ratnapala of Batticaloa too express similar views, though in a slightly different language and style.

What is the significance of these thoughts, however magnificent they may sound, of unknown monks who live among poor peo-

sants in the Dry Zone, monks who don't have any access to publishing houses in Colombo or the fairyland at Torrington square? As for one, this writer hastens to believe that their views are profoundly relevant to a reorientation of the this-worldly Buddhist ideal of contemporary Sri Lanka. The ethnic war in recent years has indeed produced a deep crisis in the Theravada Buddhist culture in Sri Lanka, although the priestly elite and the latter-day lay preachers of Buddhist ideology of the *Jathika* kind do not seem to have realized it. To put this crisis in rather rude terms, violence and death, in its most cold-blooded form, has engulfed a land where the teachings of the compassionate Buddha are supposed to guide the individual as well as social life. Has contemporary Sri Lankan Buddhism seriously addressed itself to this cruel and unfortunate paradox? The proliferation of Peace Pagodas backed by a strong yet, highly publicized peace climbs

to the Adam's peak, and peace conferences in Colombo attended by Buddhist dignitaries from Los Angeles to Mongolia does not seem to conclude with a fundamental reexamination of how to effect a selfless intervention of Buddhism by Buddhists in a time and society of war. If one goes by example of the three monks in this film, one would perhaps conclude that even such a realization can come only from those Buddhists who have nothing to lose but their lives, and those who, through sheer experience, have lost any attachments to even that life.

Finally, I only hope that the *RUPAVAHINI* which shows its viewers the life styles of the rich and the famous in the American West Coast will find just one hour of its commercially valuable time to accommodate to this report of the plight of the wretched and the unknown in the Sri Lankan East Coast. After all, peace is the message that everybody should watch and hear.

N. VAITILINGAM & CO., LTD.

70, K. CYRIL. C. PERERA MAWATHA,
COLOMBO 13.

DISTRIBUTORS OF "RIVER" BRAND GALVANISED SHEETS

**HARDWARE MERCHANTS & MANUFACTURERS OF
BARBED WIRE, WOODSCREWS & WIRENAILS.**

Office	}	33143-5, 27669, 28342
Phone: Sales Department		

Violence : Who is guiltless?

Prof. Mahinda Paliawadana

We are gathered here at least partly because we think that we would be able to influence the nation in the direction of peace and reconciliation. When I contemplate this, I am reminded of a running argument I had with a very respected elder in my young days. This person, who was a singularly effective communicator, was, at this particular period in his life, very reluctant to speak out his mind in public, although in private conversation he was an inspiring discussant. The reason he gave for his conduct was that there was nothing he could say that would really make any difference to society. I could not for a long time persuade him to the contrary. Then one day I asked him this: "Let's for a moment assume that all the people in the world are just like you. Do you think that there will be any wars in the world then?" He thought for some time and replied, "No, I don't think so". He conceded that if he expressed his thoughts in public, it was possible that he might change, to some extent, the way that people think and in this way do some thing towards creating a better world.

Looking back at this incident, which took place nearly forty years ago, I am not at all sure that either of us was quite right in our assumptions. When I think of myself and all those others who create conspicuous strife in the world — the politicians, the military people and the terrorists — If I am scrupulously honest, I don't know if there is a basic difference. I know that in my life, I have been creating a lot of little forms of strife in my own circles and also tremendous outbursts of impotent anger, which is, after all, the basis of violence. Could it not be that

the difference between me and the terrorist was at least partly that I had no easy access to a gun or some such lethal weapon, and also that I lacked the guts to go for a gun. Perhaps a mere matter of degree. I will agree that by nature I would be prone to recoil in horror at the sight of the results of my own violence. But I am not sure that I could not get used to that. And also, having tried out various little forms of violence, it may be that eventually I became convinced that there are more effective ways of achieving one's purposes. But this doesn't mean that I am non-violent, that I have shed the propensity to violence.

So, in all honesty, I cannot say that I don't contribute to violence in society. Because I am prone to be less spectacular in the expression of my own forms of violence, and in that sense perhaps more petty as a perpetrator of violence — because of that I cannot say that I am able to create peace in the world. I fear that if all the world were to become like myself, which of course is utterly impossible, that would at best make a world that may kill less, but that still has all the seeds of violence, ambition and hypocrisy.

What I am trying to say is that those of us who assume that we are at least somewhat different from the others — the others being the politicians, the terrorists and most of all the "ordinary" people — we who think that we have a message to communicate to these others, we have to seriously ask ourselves what that message is. What is the message that we are going to communicate? It cannot surely be a few slogans, the kinds of things that some people print at the top of their letter-heads? Like for example *na hi verena verani* or "Love thy neighbour as thyself?" Peace is not these words. It is not the verbal picture, the blue-print or the agenda that wellmeaning intellec-

tuals can perhaps so neatly delineate.

Of course we have moments of love and peace in our lives, but that is something that comes and goes, not some thing that we can summon at will. It is not our character, so to say.

So, I am seriously questioning the assumption that we have a message, that we are ourselves engulfed in the general disorder and violence and hypocrisy and that we are all the time mutually re-inforcing these things in our day to day relationships. The human crisis is not the product of some mysterious, unspecified people other than ourselves.

I am not saying that we should remain doing nothing. I am not recommending the easy path of inaction, if indeed that is an easy path. I am only saying that every time I contemplate this question, I come up against the hard fact that I have the same mind as all the others, that ambition, hypocrisy and violence sit there like a solid rock, that because of these things my mind is basically "separatist", and that as long as my mind is like that, I am likely to keep on contributing to the present chaos.

And the next problem is that I can achieve very little by struggling against this inner reality. It doesn't need much effort to see that the only instrument we have with which we may engage in such a struggle is that very mind which has produced this horrendous inner reality. Such a struggle would only be a re-grouping of the very forces that constitute the "separatist" mind, the violent mind. It is a mere self-deception.

Again, I don't want to say that we can do nothing. But, in all sincerity, I don't see the message that we can communicate. I can't tell the other people, "Change your mind". If that is practical

(Continued on page 24)

The writer is professor of Cultural studies at the Sri Jayawardēnēpura University — Text of a speech at a Marga seminar on "Communication strategy for Peace and Reconciliation".

Amaradeva, the melodious man

Neil Lucky Christopher

In the field of arts one is not surprised to see many artists being attacked by critics for what those artists have created. But Amaradeva is exceptional since he seems to have been subject to relentless criticism on the ground that he is reluctant to express the grievances of the working class, a misconception established in Sri Lankan art criticism that has generated a brood of inadequately baked so-called materialistic young critics. I will factor show the instances where Amaradeva has aesthetically succeeded in creating reverberant melodies, musical paintings of oppressive reality and man's persistent struggle of life. So, to begin with, I must say that Amaradeva remains unvanquished but not unchallenged, for an indisputable fact relating to art is that, a great artist is always self-critical, challenges himself. In short Amaradeva is attacked for what he has not created and not creating what the critics want him to create. What he has created remains challenging the same critics.

Since Amaradeva is our musician of hibernation who unexpectedly opens his eyes and touches the strings of our hearts with his tonal fingers giving us vibratory sort of a pleasure and again falls a sleep for a long period urging us unconsciously to hate him for depriving us of that ecstatic touch for a period (this we can bear up at least for sake of love) and creating opportunities for the anti-aesthetic, fanatically adventurist critics to slander at our Amaradeva (This too we cannot endure for sake of love). I feel unutterably necessary to criticise Amaradeva being equipped musicologically and aesthetically and of course sociologically to keep him ever-awake. To confess openly, I am ill-informed and so disqualified to do that. But, I do not hesitate to show my gratitude to Amaradeva who keeps me spiritually opulent, when most of much publicized

so-called 'voices of the epoch' do violence to our ears and mislead our younger generation involving in the destructive process of depriving our younger generation of the right to enhance themselves in their musical sensitivity. A main feature of our cultural scene is that torrents of of established popular mediocrity in art leads them to the erosion artistic sensitivity.

A volume of essays is needed to assess Amaradeva's contribution to Sinhalese music, not 'Doshiya Sangeethaya'. To hell with the idiotic attempt to call it "Doshiya Sangeethaya", a reflection of island-consciousness, disguised as national ideology that fanatically aims to achieve much and so far achieved nothing but being responsible for creating a generation alien to good music. I am incapable of comprehending this much used phrase, "Doshiya Sangeethaya" of which some appear to be the agents, who as Jayadeva, the enlightened commentator of cultural affairs said in the 'Island' 19.09.87, "subscribe to the witless thesis that a full-fledged system of music, unique and self-sufficient as that of India, Europe and Japan, can be created out of a meagre basket of folk melodies".

If a student who is in possession of a sensitive ear finds Sinhalese (not 'Doshiya') music is nothing but what Amaradeva has achieved, I have no hesitation to say that this student does not need much self-criticism and re-examination to realise that he is correct to a considerable extent. Perhaps, if the existing situation in the field of music continues for a few more decades, the student may be perfectly right. To be frank, I have been urged to accept, perhaps temporarily, the less-matured concept that where Amaradeva succeeds there Sinhalese music succeeds and, where he fails there only our music fails,

Amaradeva knows well the boundaries of his medium. He has been well-disciplined to achieve the best but not yet the maximum of what he knows. A devoted life-time student of universal music, Amaradeva has created some musical works that smush the parochial chests that what is dominant in a song is the world. When he sings he does not merely convey the verbal emotions but transforms them into melodia-centric emotions that can be assimilated well only by ear-mindedness. He fashions his voice giving appropriate tunic ornamentations so, what we appreciate is not the words, the poetry, but the words changed into tunes intensified by singing techniques. To put in another way, to appreciate poetry the foremost requirement is verbo-centric-mindedness and to appreciate songs the primary requirement is melodia-centric mindedness. Except Amaradeva I can hardly mention any 'living' vocalist (I stress the word 'living' for I cannot devalue a few singers like Rukmani Devi, Neville Fernando, and of course a certain living female singer who showed incomparable talents but now seems to have been dead artistically) who has proved us the fore-said fact about songs by his creative works. There are many who pay lip-service to the true function.

Amaradeva's works are 'romantic' in the sense that they are expressions of dissatisfaction of of the existing realities and they fetch us to a world where life seems to be ever-green. "Echa Kandukara Himaw Arano" is a fine example. Here Amaradeva succeeds in reproducing and intensifying the erotic. This type of romanticism may be a main aspect of art under oppressive socio-economic condition since hyper-sensitive persons armed with artistic talents but not with scientific understanding of society are urged to create an imaginary world where they feel life more

consolatory and belmy. No real connoisseur is exasperated if an artist involves in this type of process. Instead, he examines why and how an artist identifies himself with this type of romanticism.

Art, to my mind, is an expression of dissatisfaction of existing realities and ironically show the artist's pleasure to have a better state of existence. In that sense every real artist, to hell with popular brands like 'realistic, materialistic, capitalistic, socialist etc, involves in an individual battle consciously or unconsciously against the oppressive reality, and at once his work of art finds connoisseurs, this battle is generalized and influences on collective consciousness. First of all we should accept the fact that identification with art is a kind of spiritual intercourse, without losing intellectual awareness. In the field of music in Sri Lanka, I find none but Amaradeva who has created musical works to fulfil our real artistic demands.

Amaradeva is inexpressibly unique in singing love songs making us feel the experience in our marrow. His modulations, diatonic in particular, lead our souls to dive in the ocean of emotional experience. 'Re Duru Rata Me' Obey Desa Mage Navathanai, Aparawoo Akashe, Obe Desasi Obe Desal, are the best examples where Amaradeva attempts to convey the highly intensified grief of love and overflowing ecstasy of love. They know no bounds no, epoch. "Veenawe tata siyum wevee" is a fine example for Amaradeva's vision of music. Here he gets the maximum advantage of North Indian classical music to express his soul. He is not parochial-minded to be a victim of petty concept of "Deshiya Sangeethaya". He is well aware of making our music opulent assimilating whatever possible from a great musical tradition.

"Hoiya Hoiya" is a song that creates a picture of human life oppressed by the existing realities. Amaradeva gives much fashion

to the voice to intensify the emotions and melodiously philosophises a universal human truth. "Kele Pipunu Malak Wage Obe Rusiri Diluwa" speaks of tragedy of servitude. Here Amaradeva uses his voice to arouse humanistic concepts and make us man-loving. Amaradeva with his wife Wimala sings a song about miners. There he highlights how the poor people wrestle with life and are vigilant to death in unutterable darkness. He identifies himself with the oppressed and wishes them the success. I cannot understand why our critics of the epoch do not see how artistically Amaradeva does this.

Appreciation of Amaradeva demands mention of Mahagama Sekera. Most of Amaradeva's good songs were written by Sekera. They are inter-dependant artistic personalities. Amaradeva never became mere reciter of Sekera's compositions but, has been mentioned above, maximised their emotive capacities using his tunes and well-trained voice.

Amaradeva's recognition as a music director cannot be left unmentioned. In spite of the fact that he has not established himself as a film music director, he proves himself to be a musician who knows the function of music in a film. As a musician for drama he has gained much. "Nala Damyanthi, mudu Puththu, Karadiya, are good instances. His latest contribution to Sarathchandra's play 'Loma Hansa Nadagama' has been left not appreciated and not criticised. It is the best musical drama ever staged during 1980's, as far as it is known to me.

Amaradeva is a vocalist, musician, a well-known violinist. I am often urged to listen to how he plays "Ananda Bahirawa Raga" on violin for the cassette "Sangeethanjali" produced by the S.L.B.C.

Amaradeva's eloquence, his terse but meaningful speeches attract the audiences. He has no difficulty to find resources and facts to substantiate his views. His concise writing has something significant to make the reader

think. In Ediriweera Sarathchandra felicitation volume, while admiring and paying homage to the greatest dramatist, Amaradeva discusses musical sensitivity of Sri Lankan aesthetes: "It is no exaggeration but a truth to say that in comparison to many Asian and European countries that own a great tradition of art, Sri Lankan aesthete's taste is low. I doubt whether this has happened as a result of understanding inaccurately the Theravada Buddhism. This statement is one of the examples where Amaradeva proves himself to be not only a vocalist, musician but a person with discriminative intellect.

Amaradeva is brave enough to say what he knows and be silent on what is beyond his grasp. His weakness and greatness lie in this very fact. He does not seem to attempt to understand what is beyond his grasp. Sociologically speaking he is stagnating in his world out look. But what is admirable in his behaviour is that he has no pretensions to be the "guardian singer of the proletariat" though applications are mushrooming to win this post.

I never hesitate to reveal some instances where Amaradeva was also a victim of the populist torrents. To reveal my conscience, they exasperate me and urge me to resent him. Taking much attempt to control myself. I remember the instances where he changes the original lucidness of his songs to cater the demands of either "cassettes Mudalali" or pop-maniac, ill-trained listeners.

Amaradeva is a musician of meditation. His consistent contribution is now a must since we are heading an abyss of spiritual degeneration. He is not a singer of yesterday, today or tomorrow but all times. I am sure, when this highly brutalized capitalism is destined to meet its end signalling true revolution and this so-called ultra-leftist populist gloss fades off, people will begin to love his ambrosial creations while being critical of his some time political vacillations.

Defining a Tradition

Tilak A. Gunawardhana

Are we in the process of creating a tradition in creative and critical writing in English in this country? If so what are the elements of such tradition, or what sort of work constitute it, or what body of writing may be safely included in it. Is our experience similar to that of American, Australian, and West Indian writers and if we differ from them, in what essential respects are we unique?

Some have been inspecting from high academic pedestals for prominences in the literary landscape, and making assertions that, at last, something like a pattern is emerging. This overview, however, has in no case, in my opinion, been thorough enough, or what has been attempted is not quite what I have in mind. For instance Yasmin Gooneratne's 'English Literature' is one such sustained attempt, which I feel, has fallen far short of defining our literary tradition. It is a literary history, and very strictly so, and embraces a consideration of material that I judge to be irrelevant to our discussion. Her inclusion of James de Alwis (because Yasmin's original paper was about him, and having had access to all his papers — being a close relative) and a number of poets, and a novelist who were all British settlers here, and a discussion of their writing, though acceptable as history, cannot be considered in a discussion of this nature. The items mentioned in Gooneratne's survey are rather like pot plants of very inferior breed, and never transferred to the native soil. They withered and died in their own pots, and left neither flower nor seed. They had been kept indoors away from the tropical sun and polluting native dust, and had been maintained by the rather exclusive British community in Colombo, while those plants were still feebly alive.

Something closer to what I have in mind emerges in the recently published collection of poetry by D.C.R.A. Goonetilleke. Though that may contribute some material, like the literary periodicals we have been trying desperately to keep going but had failed, it is not the whole story. The latter have been publishing mainly criticism, which has performed the important function of focusing attention on those elements of the tradition that require explicit elaboration and evaluation, even though the authors of important studies would not have realised the full historical significance of their contribution at the time.

The body of writing that has been looked at in Sri Lanka has, in my opinion, been too narrow for any clear pattern to be discerned. For instance recent critics looking at fiction have been concentrating on, apart from a few others Punyakanti Wijesatke and James Goonewardena. What is the nature of their real achievement, and what do they represent? Fiction in Sri Lanka must look appallingly inadequate, and of very poor quality, with those two as our main representatives. Poetry does not fare that badly, but what has been selected for international consumption represent only a fraction of our achievement.

Our's is a multi-lingual culture, and the body of writing discussed cannot be strictly confined to English alone. Most of us are bilingual (Sinhala-English or Tamil-English) and in recent times bilingualism has spread to embrace a very large proportion of the discerning reading public, and theatre audiences. This is an important fact and it is worthy of note that even the Association of English Teachers and the editors of 'Navasilu' have come to recognise it. The English

Departments of our campuses also have realised the futility of an all-English approach and Sinhala writing is receiving some academic attention.

Our bilingual character is central to a discussion of our response to our unique environment. It is in this respect we differ from Americans, Australians and West Indians. For us English is only one of the instruments of expression, and to speak of a tradition of English to the exclusion of Sinhala or Tamil, is to speak of a small part of our total personality.

Hence we should approach the subject of tradition with an acute awareness of this interdependence, and the close relationship that now subsists between the creative and critical work in the Sinhala-English media. (This would apply with equal force to the Tamil-English tradition). The interaction has been strongly evident in recent Sinhala fiction and criticism that has been spanning the cultural divide very successfully for sometime. The Sinhala theatre has been transformed, and in this department the English (local) theatre's role as an innovative factor has been widely recognised, even though the English theatre itself is now lagging way behind the Sinhala counterpart.

The interaction has been most fruitful with those who have had their discriminating skills developed in the study of English literature, and who have been applying those skills in the examination of Sinhala writing, and this in turn has had a discernible effect on Sinhala fiction. Incidentally the better Sinhala fiction is way ahead of locally produced English fiction. The strict compartmentalisation that was the reality sometime ago has almost disappeared, and

a common pool of literary ability is emerging, working in two languages even though in expression some may have gained fluency in only one. Sathichandra may be quoted as an example, when with some work in Sinhala to his credit, he published a novel in English recently, and which has won some critical recognition.

The tradition that I envisage must include the more significant and more durable work of Sinhala and Tamil along with English, or at least a recognition of their place in the scheme of things.

To have said this is not have exhausted the subject, because of the non-uniformity of standpoints. Evaluation of creative work necessarily involve political, philosophical, and class considerations and influences. Though these are important and real problems, I do not propose to introduce a discussion of those aspects here in this brief note. ●

Cyprus. . .

(Continued from page 9)

Mr Vassiliou stood as an independent but had the support of Akel (the Communist Party) and of the Socialist for the decisive round; he must also have won over some of Mr Kyprianou's centrist supporters for his platform of unconditional moves towards a settlement. The President-elect reflected the narrowness of his victory by talking a tough public stance towards negotiations in his victory speech, disappointing Mr Denktash who nevertheless and commendably offered an early meeting. But Mr Vassiliou, citing Clerides too is entitled to argue that he already has the backing of almost the entire electorate for such talks. There are already hints from Ankara of a partial withdrawal of troops. All this offers the best hope more than ten years. Everyone who has a stake in a stable Cyprus should put their shoulders to the sudden wheel of progress.

The plight. . .

(Continued from page 15)

My brother-in-law and elder brother were both shot dead. We have no home.

Our mother lives in a small hut.

Who maintains her?

I have an elder brother of 14. He helps her. He has started a small trade. That's how he looks after mother.

A student of the Eastern University (Tamil)

I was a student of this Eastern University from 1981 till 1985. At the time I was a student my education was to a large extent disrupted. When I entered the University in the 1980s there were no problems. But owing to the ethnic conflict my education was seriously disturbed. What we hear often is the sound of guns. Because of this we were in a situation where we couldn't even return home. We were shut up inside the University. Not only that — even in the area around the university we often hear firing. Also the students themselves have had to face difficulties owing to so-called investigations. Recently about thirty students were taken away. While I was a student, the forces subjected me too to several interrogations, and I faced them.

When I went to the Karadiyanaru farm in connection with a project, I was arrested and asked a number of questions. That caused me great mental stress.

Woman (Tamil)

I have two girls. I went to the Kandasamy temple. We have nothing. Everything was burnt. We went there and cried out and wept. With nothing in our hands we went to the refugee camp. There people said to me, 'What happened to you happened to me also.' I have two nephews in the next village. Nothing happened to them. I really don't even eat fish and meat. I stayed in the refugee camp. With nothing to do and unable to turn to anybody I stayed there. But I was able to obtain some cooking pots there.

Violence: Who. . .

(Continued from page 20)

advice I would have started with myself, in the first place, and then of course I would have had the right qualification. What I wish to say is that as long as we remain what we are, our efforts to create peace are likely to be an exercise in futility.

I hate to think that all I may have done is to give the impression of a totally stilted, negative and unproductive attitude. However, that is certainly not my attitude. By all means, let us try to do whatever we think may be effective. But let us know our limitations. Let us not mis-assess the stupendous nature of the problem. Above all let us try to remember that we are ourselves among the creators of the problem.

Let us not forget how a lifetime of work in the cause of peace and reconciliation by Mahatma Gandhi went up in the flames of communal hate in the 6 months that followed the independence of India. And it is a most sobering lesson to all peace makers to reflect on the fate of the ideology that the Mahatma so lovingly fashioned. In its actual program of action as an independent nation, has not India consciously dismantled that ideology, piece by piece, with imperial disdain? Why was this so easy to achieve?

Like all religious traditions, Gandhi tried to fortify the seemingly noble element of the fragmented mind of the human being. He hoped in this way to inactivate the other, darker side of psyche. It didn't work.

So isn't there a serious flaw in this strategy? Or, can we hope to make it work, now that we have a revolution in the technology of communication?

Tall and proud... Our legacy for tomorrow

Trees... the very core of existence...
Pulsating life force of nature... so vital for
our survival.

Destruction of Trees... Ultimate
inevitable price of progress as technology
rides ahead of nature, shattering the
delicate ecological balance.

Our contribution - Responding to
the call and need of our country, we have
launched a massive, systematic and
scientific reforestation scheme. We have
already planted 975,000 trees at

Naula, Bowana and Walapane on land
unsuitable for cropping.

Our target - A breathtaking two
million four hundred thousand trees,
covering 2,000 acres by 1987.

Our objective - Preserving... Re-
establishing the life cycle of nature...
Bridging the gap between progress and
nature... Planning... Planting... Gently
nurturing... for tomorrow's world today...
Giving back to nature what progress
takes out.



Ceylon Tobacco Company Limited

Sharing and caring - for our land and her people

WE ARE A DIFFERENT KIND OF GUARDIAN TO YOU !

There are a multitude of guardians during your lifetime

- They who guard the freedom of speech & expression
- They who protect the basic human rights of mankind
- They who guard the democratic freedoms to which each of us are entitled to as citizens

*Each of us is a guardian to others who view us for their
dependency in day to day life*

**BUT THE DIFFERENCE IN OUR GUARDIANSHIP
RESTS ON OUR DEEP CONCERN FOR YOUR FUTURE
WE ARE TRUSTED GUARDIANS OF YOUR HARD-EARNED
MONEY, GUIDING YOU ON HOW TO SPEND AND HOW TO SAVE
FOR YOU AND YOUR DEPENDENTS' TOMORROWS**

**SO REACH OUT TODAY
FOR YOUR LIFE-LONG GUARDIAN**



PEOPLE'S BANK

A Different Kind Of Guardian For You

